

VERMONT
Workforce Development Council
Executive Committee

Monday, October 8, 2007

1) DOL Apprenticeship Programs - Pat Nagey, DOL Apprenticeship Director provided informational materials on the Apprenticeship program and data on enrollments. There are a total of 979 active apprenticeships. Of these, 380 are Electrical apprentices and 288 are Plumbing apprentices. There are 29 other occupations in which apprentices are registered. Other than Plumbers and Electricians, the occupations with significant enrollment are Toolmakers, Child Care Specialists (a program started with a WETF grant ten years ago) Line Maintenance Workers, State Troopers, HVAC Technicians, and Ski Lift Technicians. The growth of the program is limited by the State budget of about \$400,000 because the fees paid by employers and students does not cover the full cost.

2) Act 46 Update - Pat Reported on WETF Training grants through Sept 30. There have been 11 grants totaling \$476,539, about ¼ of the WETF Funds allocated for training programs. Considering that the new program was not available until mid July and that summer tends to be a slower period, this rate of spending is healthy. She pointed out that outcomes from these programs will not be available until spring in most cases.

Also discussed was the geographic distribution of the grants, which, while better than in the past is not as complete as we would like. Also, concern was expressed about the sectors being served and how to expand this to better reflect growing economic sectors. Pat and Chip have planned a conference call with WIBs and RDCs to address these concerns. Chip is also working with VBSR, and will be attending conferences on renewable energy and education in the green sector to make some contacts in these areas. It was agreed that DOL will do more press releases to promote grant awards. We discussed whether we are using the WETF investments as strategically as possible or prioritizing certain jobs or sector and seeking projects pro-actively rather than waiting to see what come in.

The discussion turned to outcomes. As currently structured, the staff collects quarterly reports on each project, monitors expenditures, and gets a final report on outcomes, job placements and raises. There is no system, nor are there the resources to follow up on the longer term outcomes. The most practical way to accomplish that is to collect SS#s that can be run through the DOL wage reporting system. DOL is authorized in law to collect these from all employers through the wage reporting system, however the ability to collect these from individuals in Act 46 programs is constrained by a law that prohibits state agencies from collecting them for other purposes unless specifically authorized to do so in state law. It was agreed that this might be worth pursuing.

Other options were discussed for measuring outcomes including a formula based approach such as is used by VEGI and The Vermont Training Program. These are based on certain aggregate numbers of jobs and payroll rather than data on individual workers.

Chip subsequently contacted Fred Kenney to see how VEGI calculates ROI and learned that they use a software model that costs \$100,000 up front plus an annual licensing fee, plus a contract to Jeff Carr to run the numbers. This package factors in payroll, jobs, and capital investments to calculate a return including the resulting tax revenues. The VT Training Program uses a similar approach but contracts with Jeff Carr to use his licensed software rather than owning it. Chip will contact Phil Fagan to determine his cost.

- Internships - The first round of Internship proposals will be at DOL soon and can be reported at the next meeting.

- Tech Ed Programs - The applications for the Career Awareness applications are due next week and Alternative Technical Education on Nov. 16. Adult Tech Ed will be distributed on a population-based formula calculated on the tech center serving regions. This will determine an amount that each region can apply for as a maximum with an application form that stresses outcomes and that these funds can not supplant existing effort and funding.

4) Workforce Sustainability and Leadership Committees - Chip reported that the Sustainability Committee will hold its first meeting on Oct. 25. Pat will attend. Chip has been asked to arrange out-of-state speakers by Hinda Miller and Michele Kupersmith. He has lined up someone from Iowa on the Bond funded tax increment repayment program, the Maine program that gives students tax credits to repay school loans and a person from the Workforce Alliance in Washington who can provide a national overview of innovative training ideas. Jerry and John agreed to attend to hear these presentations. Chip was also asked to present and it was agreed that he should focus on the trends in our challenge statement and employer needs.

The first meeting of the Leadership Committee is scheduled for November 7.

5) Planning the Agenda for the Winter Council Meeting - Wednesday, January 9, 1:00 - 5:00. With the assistance of Senator Collins, Chip has been able to reserve room 11 at the Statehouse from 1:00 to 4:00 and the Cedar Creek Room for a reception at 4:00 at which we will hear brief presentations from a sampling of reports from Act 46 grant recipients. The agenda needs further work, but will include reports from the Sustainability Committee, the Leadership Committee and discussion and set up of several new committees that members will be encouraged to join. Some members of these should be picked in advance. Each Committee should have goals and objectives with reports planned for the summer meeting. The November meeting will be primarily dedicated to planning this agenda.